The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

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DEDICATION

To the brave women who to-day are fighting for freedom: to the noble women who all down the ages kept the flag flying and looked forward to this day without seeing it: to all women all over the world, of whatever race, or creed, or calling, whether they be with us or against us in this fight, we dedicate this paper.

THE OUTLOOK

The Representation of the People Bill received the Royal Assent on February 6; and for the last time we meet our readers through the medium of VOTES FOR WOMEN. This, the February number of our paper, will be the final issue of the suffrage journal which has chronicled our movement, without a break, since October, 1907. But our regrets at severing a long and interesting connection, real though they are, are overwhelmed in the joy and thankfulness we feel at the victory of our cause. VOTES FOR WOMEN comes to an end because the cause for which it stands has triumphed. There could be no better end for any paper that stands for a great cause.

How the Victory was Won

When we last went to press, the Second Reading of the Bill had been passed by the House of Lords. An anxious moment was reached when, on January 10 and 11, Lord Loreburn's amendment to strike Woman Suffrage out of the Bill was debated in Committee. Its rejection by the large majority of 63 (134 to 71) was followed by attempts to insert proposals to submit the Woman Suffrage clause either to a referendum of men, or to a referendum of women Local Government electors. These were both rejected on January 15; and Woman Suffrage became safe so long as the Bill was safe. When the Bill was returned to the House of Commons on February 1, two main alterations had been made in it by the Lords: Proportional Representation had been re-inserted, and the alternative vote had been taken out. Round these amendments controversy raged during the two fateful days, February 5 and 6. The Bill was sent backwards and forwards between the two Houses, the situation being rendered all the more tense by the fact that the Prorogation must take place not later than February 7. Alarmist headlines, asking if the Bill was dead, appeared in the daily papers and did not tend to allay the fears of those who had so often seen their hopes dashed to the ground in former years. At 7.30, on the evening of February 6, a compromise was effected; the alternative vote was dropped, and a Commission agreed to, which should frame an experimental scheme of Proportional Representation in 100 constituencies. The Bill went back for the last time to the House of Lords, and in the presence of Members of both Houses and of a group of women Suffragists, the Representation of the People Act, 1918, was signed by Royal Commission, shortly after 8 o'clock.

The New Electorate

The new Reform Act is very much wider in scope than those which have preceded it. The Act of 1832 enfranchised 500,000 new voters; that of 1867, 1,000,000 new voters; that of 1884, 2,000,000 new voters; that of 1918, 8,000,000 new voters, of whom 6,000,000 are women. In 1832, the total number on the Register was 1,000,000 (1 in 24 of the population). In 1918, the number on the Register will be 16,000,000 (1 in 3 of the population). In addition to the growth of the electorate the new Act shows a corresponding growth in the membership of the House of Commons. Unless there is a diminution of the Irish representation in the meantime, there will be 37 more M.P.'s after the next General Election than before the passing of the Bill, making a total membership of 707. In 1801, there were only 658 Members; in 1885, 670. But, of course, the Franchise clauses of the new Reform Act are those that concern us most here. The establishment of a 6 months' residential qualification for men establishes almost manhood suffrage. The admission of women local government electors, and of the wives of local government electors, provided they are over thirty years of age, is the greatest change of all.

The Women Who Will Have Votes

It is estimated that about five out of the six million women voters will be wives of local government electors, the latter to include Peers, according to Lord Desborough's ruling in the House of Lords, confirmed by Lord Peel. (Hansard, January 17, page 770.) The qualification for the Local Government franchise is a six months' ownership or tenancy of land or premises—lodgers in *furnished* rooms not to be qualified. Two other franchises are also open to women under the Act. Every woman graduate is qualified for the University vote, as are also women who have attained to the level of a degree in a University that does not confer degrees upon women. The War Service franchise, too, would appear to be open to women serving away from home in Red Cross work, or "in any other work recognised by the Admiralty, Army Council or Air Council, as work of national importance in connection with the war." In addition, "any incapacity of a Peer to vote at an election arising from the status of a Peer shall not extend to Peeresses in their own right." It must be remembered, of course, that in no case will women be qualified for the Parliamentary vote until they have attained the age of thirty years. For further details as to the women's qualifications we refer our readers to an excellent article by Miss Chrystal Macmillan in the *Common Cause* (February 1).

Great Britain Leads the Way!

It adds greatly to the joy of Suffragists in their hour of victory to know, that Great Britain, slow though she has been to take action, is the first among sovereign states to enfranchise her women. The probable effect of her example is incalculable. Already there is news of a Hungarian Franchise Bill, which, if it becomes law, will enfranchise women over 24 years of age with a rather high educational qualification, or who exercise a liberal profession, or are the widows of soldiers. In America, the Federal Suffrage Amendment to the Constitution passed last month in the House of Representatives with the requisite majority and comes up in the Senate after we go to press. These [illegible] of the times, of the great futur[illegible] which the women of Great Britain are [illegible]nting the way through the freedom they have at last won.

United Suffragists' Farewell

We hope everyone who reads this paper will make a note of all the Suffrage Celebrations of which we give details elsewhere. The United Suffragists, whose organization will close down at the end of March in order to set free its men and women members for public work of a wider and more varied order, will hold a farewell reception for their members on Saturday, March 16. Particulars of this will be found on page 336, and we take this opportunity of asking our friends to apply to us for cards of invitation in order that our long and pleasant fellowship in a great movement may be brought to an end in a way that is really not an end, but rather a beginning of new activities, and new work in the cause of humanity.

BOUND VOLUMES OF "VOTES FOR WOMEN"

Important!

A certain number of sets of VOTES FOR WOMEN in bound volumes (from Vol. II. to Vol. VIII., inclusive, Vol. I. being out of print) can be obtained at the greatly reduced price of Two Guineas, on application to the Manager, VOTES FOR WOMEN, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.2. As these constitute an exhaustive chronicle of the Suffrage movement since the year 1908, our readers' attention is drawn to this offer with a request that their applications shall be made as speedily as possible.

U.S. Bound Volume, 1915-18

The last bound volume of the series, Volume IX., containing all the issues of the paper from October, 1915, till February, 1918, will be ready shortly, and will be issued at 12s. 6d., bound in purple, white and orange, uniform with Volume VIII. *It is urgently requested that orders for Volume IX. be sent at once to the Manager, and in no case later than the end of February*, as otherwise they cannot, in the present shortage of material, be supplied.

LOOKING BACKWARD

By F. W. Pethick Lawrence

Ten and a-half years ago! Not very long in the life of an individual: still less in the life of a nation! But to women, what a chasm between then and now!

Go out into the streets; and try to think yourself back in 1907. These postwomen, these 'bus girls, these chauffeuses, these van drivers, these telegraph messengers, these sturdy short-skirted business women marching to their work, where were they then? Go into the railway stations and note the booking-clerks, the ticket collectors, even the porters and the tube-attendants. Pass into the factories and watch the skilled women mechanics. Sit in the galleries of the Municipal Council Chambers and see the attention paid to the words of the women Councillors. Enquire the numbers of this year's women medical students. Go into the City Temple and hear Maude Royden preach. Attend a debate in the House of Commons; look for the vanished grille, and listen in vain for the contemptuous jibe at the expense of women.

All these are landmarks, the vote the greatest of them all. Be sure that you recognise them and appreciate them. But do not forget that in the realm of the spirit are the fundamental changes of which these outward and visible events do no more than give an indication. Ten and a-half years ago men assumed, and the great mass of women accepted the assumption, that men were the race, that men's point of view was the right point of view, that democracy meant the rule of men, that women were inferior and subject. Into most men's minds to-day there has come a doubt as to the truth of this assumption, into most women's minds there has come a certainty that it is false. In the light of this new understanding all the great questions of life—industry, war, love, honour, duty, patriotism—have to be reviewed afresh. This is a work for the future. To-day, with the destruction of the sex barrier to the franchise, a stage has been reached, at which it is worth while to stop for a moment and cast one look backward to trace the road along which we have come.

Beginning of "Votes for Women"

Ten and a-half years ago this paper was founded as the organ of a little body of people who with eyes of faith saw what is seen now by the multitude. Those were days when the new idea went in peril of its life; when merely to believe in votes for women was to be a crank. While for those who went further, who in audacious thought placed women's enfranchisement foremost among reforms, and who dared to act upon this conviction, the penalty was to become the object of general derision.

But what did ridicule count against the joy of having seen one gleam of supreme truth? What did it matter if the serried ranks of the past and even of the present were ranged in opposition when the countless hosts of the future gave their friendly support? Besides, there was comradeship and communion and the service of a cause which knows no barriers of class or creed or country, but which is wide as the human race.

Different temperaments produce different actions; and a franchise struggle has need of advocates of every temperament. The conciliatory suffragists placed their entire confidence in argument and persuasion. The militants, later in the field, flung themselves on the prejudices of the age with the vigour and determination of youth. Many things went under in the struggle—"ladylike" reserve, old ideas of womanly dutifulness and wifely obedience, implicit confidence in those in high places, respect for the laws of the land. Thousands made the acquaintance of prison cells, and learnt to associate on a new basis of comradeship with the outcast and the despised. They explored the rottenness of the established order and exposed the truthlessness of officialdom alike in the prison and in the highest positions in the State.

Events of the Ten Years

This paper supported from the first the militants, and became the recognised organ of one great section. The years that followed were packed full of incident. Great public meetings, monster demonstrations, "raids" upon Parliament, ejections from Cabinet Ministers' audiences, police court proceedings, sentences in prison, welcomes on release, hunger strikes, forcible feedings, followed one another with startling rapidity. A series of Suffrage Bills were introduced into the House of Commons and suffered their demise. Pledges were given by statesmen and shamelessly broken. Passions rose and methods of violence succeeded to mere defiance of the law.

Divisions and separations came within the suffrage movement other than merely between the militant and conciliatory wings. Some of these were material and desirable, others were accidental and injurious. But, looking back on the whole story of the agitation, one is struck with the value of the contribution supplied by each section of the movement and with the fact that the major stress of the conflict rested, now on one, now on another, of every one of the great national organisations.

The War and Our Movement

The war which changed all Europe changed incidentally the character of the struggle for the suffrage. At first, it seemed as if votes for wom had been postponed to an indefinite date n the post-war period. Several suffrage soci ies put up their shutters. Some suffrage papers ceased to mention the winning of the franchise by women. This paper, and the organisation to which it had then become attached, stuck womanfully to their purpose. The tremendous ability displayed by women everywhere, their enthusiastic devotion to the service of their country as each interpreted it for herself, brought a new understanding to men and even to politicians. The lapse of the Register created a political vacuum which had to be filled. When, therefore, this paper pointed out the impossibility of revising the Register without reforming the Franchise, and further insisted upon the great opportunity thus offered of settling the Woman Suffrage question, as well as removing the anomalies of the male franchise already in existence, it became prophetic of the victory we have since gained.

A Greater Fight to Come

The findings of the Speaker's Conference, the compromise with regard to women, the introduction of the Bill, its passage through Commons and Lords by surprising majorities, are matters of recent history. The actual victory is both greater and less than that for which women originally fought. The numbers are more, but sex equality is still to seek. If this were the end the defects might grieve us. But this is not the end, but the beginning. This is the first throwing open of the gate. This is the dawn of the new day. The old struggle is gone for ever. The new struggle is to come. We cry with Whitman:—

"Have the past struggles succeeded?

"What has succeeded? Yourself? your nation? Nature?

"Now understand me well—it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary."

THE CLARION CALL

I am glad to have this opportunity of joining my friends and comrades in writing a last note for VOTES FOR WOMEN. It seems centuries ago since I first saw a copy of this paper, which has had such a great influence in helping women to win the rights of citizenship. Somehow, I have come to believe that the fight for women's emancipation has been, if not the biggest, at least one of the most important social and political struggles in which I have taken part. I don't believe I would ever have realised its importance but for the fact that quite early in life I saw with my own eyes the degradation of womanhood, and realised her dependent position; but it was the great movement started by Mrs. Pankhurst and Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence which made me understand how much the denial of the rights of citizenship stamped women as socially and politically inferior to men. Reading VOTES FOR WOMEN, and especially the splendid words of dedication inscribed on it, was an inspiration to me. There were times when I felt that if giving one's life would have brought success I would cheerfully have given it. Most of us, and especially a person like myself, are compelled to learn that the best service we can give to a cause is to *live* for it; and now that the sex barrier is broken down and at long last the victory is won, at least so far as a large mass of women are concerned, I am glad to join with my comrades in their shout of triumph, and to pledge myself anew to fight on and on till we have brought all women on a level with all men so far as the rights of citizenship are concerned.

Our work, however, has only just begun. Women and men have to rebuild a broken and a ruined world. We are glad to be numbered with those who have assisted to strike away some of the shackles which kept our sisters down. But now we must with them march forward to make the world tolerable to live in. I remember the words of Olive Schreiner in her book, "Woman and Labour," in which she tells of the German women who marched side by side with their men to the overthrow of the effete and corrupt Roman Empire. The call to each of us, man or woman, is to a nobler struggle, a struggle in which we shall destroy no one, maim and wound no single human being, but, instead, will bring to all the children of men the blessings of Peace, Progress and Brotherhood.

I hope and trust women of all classes will hear the clarion call which is sounding throughout the world to-day, calling us all to be up and doing, to turn away from the old false gods of self-interest, of indolence and pleasure, and consecrate ourselves to the service of our fellow men and women. It is, indeed, a call bidding us all embark on another great crusade; in fact, the last crusade our poor humanity must embark on—but the greatest of them all, because this time, we are bidden to join together, not to gather for ourselves, but to give ourselves for the service of all. The glorious suffrage movement, with all its success and all its failures, drew together a vast army of young people who cheerfully enlisted to serve the cause. We want all these to hear the call to-day of sorrowing, suffering humanity, and each one to resolve to enter once more on a great adventure to assist in removing from our midst all those causes which create wars, and which may be summed up in the words Greed and Selfishness. These in turn produce poverty of mind and body, destitution, and prostitution, and all the evils each of us so much deplore. I hope, comrades, we shall meet again, still comrades in arms, working and toiling to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, which is the only thing worth living or dying for.

George Lansbury.

"ADSUM!"

By Laurence Housman

The U.S. body is not so old, at the moment of happy release, as Colonel Newcome, whose last word, "Adsum!" gives its text to this article. As a body, we are very young—an emergency body, born four years ago, to meet certain circumstances which, with the passing of the Representation of the People Bill, have ceased to be circumstantial. But in spirit we are old—older than the Fall of Man, since we stand for that other side of him from which his fall was a departure, and to which the passing of this Bill means the beginnings of a return. Henceforth, we are United Suffragists, not in intelligent anticipation of coming events, but as fellow members of the larger electoral body.

And so to-day we say "Adsum!" because that larger hope in which we trusted—not faintly, but always with certainty—has at last become a reality. "Votes for Women" has arrived! It is no longer a scrap of paper with a fluttering circulation, waved at us from street corners by meek persistent paper-sellers, cheerful in the face of odds; it is "practical politics" put into practice, a waiting wonder, that has come to pass. And so, as stars that melt in the growing brightness of dawn, this small star-group of United Suffragists changes its appearance, and merges, but does not cease to be.

Members will recall the circumstances which brought us together. We were drawn into corporate being by certain affinities and loyalties at a time of breach and disunion within the movement—of bitterness and indignation also against those who, holding power, withheld freedom; and we stood especially to affirm what the cruel and stupid obstinacy of our male politicians was making Suffragists inclined to forget, that ours was a common cause for men and women alike; that though the withholding from them of the vote was more intensely felt and more instinctively resented by women, it mattered really just as much to men; that it was—to say no more—"a debt of honour which did not brook delay."

To-day, by legislative act, the debt has been recognised, and a first large instalment has been paid. Instead of an unsecured, it is now a secured one; and when they unite to demand it women can get the rest. The movement for Adult Suffrage, to which we adhere, will still go on, but no longer, as sometimes in the past, carrying with it the danger of delaying, by the substitute of manhood suffrage, the more urgently needed enfranchisement of women. A few years ago the Adult Suffrage cry, insufficiently backed by those political organisations which stood for it—played against us for all it was worth by those who opposed it, but not by any means played for all it was worth by those who approved it—will have henceforth no lurking peril in it for the woman's movement. It is the next inevitable step. Women can no longer be left in the lurch, or on the doormat, defrauded of their right of petition, as in the past; politicians will no longer boast of having "torpedoed," without insuring a better substitute, the ship on which all their hopes were embarked; the whole situation, though equality is not yet attained, is radically changed, and will henceforward and irresistibly develop in that single direction. And so we, a small society which came together in a certain contingency to meet certain circumstances, can now honestly say, when the contingency and the circumstances are over, that the task we set ourselves is done.

We came together at a moment when there was a breach in our ranks; we determined that we would stand men and women together, giving a welcome to all who in their political creed placed Woman's Suffrage first; we determined not to dispute about methods, not to criticise other societies, and when the war came we determined to keep the Suffrage flag flying. And we have done it. The fact that the Suffrage flag still flew—and the U.S. was not the only society which saw to it—had its effect upon the political situation, and upon the social expedients disreputably attempted by politicians looking for a short and easy cut at Cardiff, Plymouth, Westminster and elsewhere. Had we all stood down, in submission to the emergencies of war, more wrong would have been done to women than actually has been done, more short cuts would have been devised at the woman's expense; had we entirely disappeared, more would have thought than actually did that the movement also had disappeared and could be safely and comfortably ignored.

To-day, rather tired, and very much relieved that our own particular bit of responsibility is over, we cry "Adsum!"—having stood together a small but united group—"Usque ad finem!"—up to the end. We have many more grey hairs among us than when we started on this work; but if we could number them all (and we cannot!) to know how many stand between us and lost youth, we should not grudge a single one. "Finis" is a joyful word when set to such a task as this; and the more joyful because it means so much more than it says. It does not mean, "Here is the end"; it means "Here is the beginning."

NOW FOR A NEW WORLD!

The acceptance in this country of the principle of Woman Suffrage has done more than all our fighting to make the world safe for democracy. Only an idea in action can bring about changes of thought and habit. Britain as the Mother of Parliaments, leading by her example nation after nation in Europe to free institutions, did more in the last century (by bringing about a condition of liberty in the world) to ensure her own children against slavery, than she did or could have done as Ruler of the Waves. And though our country comes considerably behind the van in her endorsement of the human claim of women to self-government, yet now that she has endorsed it she has vindicated the principle of "Right above Might," in the sight of all nations, more surely than by any other act she has accomplished for many years past.

I cannot get away from the vital connection between this accomplished fact and the issues for the sake of which the world is being rent to-day. Now that the royal signature is appended to the Reform Bill the seal has been set to our faith in the rights of the people to self-determination. Henceforth the political and legal status of women will be to a large measure in their own hands. And autocracy—the autocracy of sex, every bit as demoralising to the whole nation as the autocracy of caste—will have received a crushing blow.

I see also in this new extension of human liberty a new power given to men and women for attack on materialism at its very source.

Penetrate deep into the psychological causes of war, you find covetousness and greed demanding for their protection force, which brings about the death of love. Covetousness and greed and force have entrenched themselves hitherto in the very heart of life. Love has been driven from its great creative purpose in human relationship by the same dead materialism that has brought civilisation to the verge of ruin. Into the most sacred union of man and woman have entered economic bondages and other enslavements. These by the new power given to men and women must be swept away.

Much will have to be adjusted in the legal and economic sphere. The laws affecting marriage, divorce and illegitimacy must be changed because they are based on property and not on life; and the status of the mother has to be made tolerable by some scheme of public maintenance for children, which will ensure her economic security and human dignity. Equal pay for equal work (which becomes possible when mothers are free to withdraw from the labour market, because the maintenance of children is assured by the community) must be established for all workers without regard to sex. And many other practical measures of reform must be pressed forward by the new electorate. But all these definite reforms which we have at heart must be directed to the end of setting free from materialistic and economic enslavements, and from every kind of domination, the one creative force of the universe, which is love—whether at its source, in the union of man and woman, or whether in its widened spheres of the family, the communities, the nation, or the great commonwealth of nations now existing on this planet.

"Are you content?" they say to us—to us who have in the past considered this apparently small extension of human liberty worth giving our lives for. No. We are not content. We want a new world. We realise that the creators of that new world are the women and men now living in it and handing on life. Every extension of human liberty means an extension to the human race of deliberate creative power. We want a new world: with new human beings, children who have been brought into it by the same creative joy by which the suns and stars have been swung in the sky. We want a new world where the finest achievements of the mind and the spirit are directed to the furtherance not of death but of life. We set our face to the future.

Emmeline Pethick Lawrence

THE LONG TRAIL

On the Bridge of the Now, that wonderful bridge of accomplishment that spans the chasm between defeat that is done for and victory that is sure, the eyes of my soul look onwards to a free future of free women—women born free and breathing freedom as a right, growing up in freedom, working in freedom—a future of glory, of beauty and of gentleness. But the eyes of my heart turn back to the women of the past, to the long trail of their long march; to the women who built the bridge. With faith they built it, with suffering, with hunger, thirst, weariness, patience, passion, with the mud of ridicule, the stones of contempt, with the sting of outrage and the slime of insult, with the longing of their souls, the gifts of their minds, the blood of their hearts and the pain of their bodies. On they came to the edge of the chasm where victory beckoned and defeat awaited them; and paused never, but marched on over the edge, till the gulf was no gulf, filled to the very brim with their courage, their anguish, their deeds, their daring, their endurance.

So the bridge was made. Standing on it, with the call of the splendid future sounding in me like a song, the message that wells up from my innermost self is a message to those women of the past. Women of the past, I greet you! I greet your unselfishness, your single-mindedness, your daring and your faith; in reverence and gratitude, in sympathy and humility; in joy that I am a woman even as you were; in confidence that, while the world lasts, the fight that you fought shall never be forgotten. And women, you, too, I greet, of the past and of the future, too, who have fought the good fight and kept the faith and stand in the triumph of to-day! I greet you with hope and joy and a fervour of congratulation that finds no words; and in the glory of the thought that the "Divinity which shapes our ends" has shaped them now, by means of you and those other builders of the bridge, so that the women of all time may have the freedom that to women is most dear, the freedom to work freely for the world.

G. Colmore.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

After consulting many of the subscribers to VOTES FOR WOMEN, *we have found that, without exception, they have been willing to allow us to transfer the balance of their subscriptions for this year to the funds of our Woman Citizen's Club in the Borough Road, S.E.*

We should be much obliged if other subscribers, who may wish their subscriptions returned or applied to any other purpose, would kindly inform us as soon as possible.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

27, CHANCERY LANE, W.C.

Telegraphic Address:—Unisuffra. Holb., London
Telephone:—Holborn 5880

FEBRUARY, 1918.

THE FUTURE

A long and hardly contested battle for freedom has been won. The Representation of the People Act is on the statute book, and we have advanced a good step along the road that leads to the complete enfranchisement of women. When the Bill passed, on the very eve of the Prorogation, a blow was struck for liberty and democracy all over the world. If what Napoleon said is true—that the only victories that leave no regrets are those that are gained over ignorance—then in a very special sense our victory is the greatest victory that has yet been won over Prussianism.

An International Victory

At all times, nations are members one of another, and justice or tyranny done to the people of one country is justice or tyranny done to the peoples of all countries. In a world war, when the destinies of States are to a still greater extent interwoven, and when, in order to champion democracy with clean hands, every country has to submit its internal affairs to the scrutiny of every other country, this interdependence of nations and of national ideals becomes still more acutely emphasized. That is why the enfranchisement of British women at such a crisis in our history has more than a national significance. It is likely to have a far-reaching effect on all those countries whose women are still unenfranchised, which have been waiting for some Great Power to lead the way in this reform. That our own country should be that pioneer Great Power is for us a subject of profound rejoicing and brings with it a sense of deep responsibility.

What We have Won

We do not pretend that the enfranchisement of six million women, even when coupled with other long delayed electoral reforms, represents the full measure of our desire. Our demand, as Suffragists, remains what it has always been—a demand for the complete political equality of men and women. It was only because we realised that to hold out for this full measure of enfranchisement might endanger the success of the whole Bill that we decided to come into line with other Suffragists in regarding as an instalment the compromise put forward by the Speaker's Conference. We have won that instalment; and at the next general election, perhaps the most important ever yet held in this country, six million women, the majority of them the wives and mothers of men and women workers, will be able to vote. That is less than we demanded: it is six times as many as we were ready to live and die for at the time of the Conciliation Bill; and we maintain that, had not the United Suffragists among others made their demand an adult suffrage one, in the critical days of 1916, the number of women enfranchised to-day would be considerably nearer the smaller estimate than the larger one. We are not content; but we rejoice at the advance of five millions that has been won since the stormy days, the great days, of 1910-11. And we realise to the full how much to-day's victory is the outcome of the struggle and sacrifice of the militant years 1905-1914, and of the women's steady educational and political campaign that dates back to 1867, and, indeed, of every bid for freedom that has been made by woman all down the ages.

Ourselves

And now, what next? Perhaps our readers will forgive us if, this last time that we shall have the opportunity of coming before them, we dwell a little upon the personal aspect of the new situation created by the women's victory. The United Suffragists, the first Suffrage Society, we believe, in which men and women sat in equal numbers on the Executive, came into being exactly four years ago, in February, 1914, at a moment when it seemed desirable for men and women to work together for political equality. The success of the experiment was instantaneous. Members joined in hundreds, large public meetings were successfully held, and a political campaign was started in the constituencies. The war came in six months' time: the Society decided, though in the face of difficulties almost insuperable to so new a body, to keep the Suffrage Flag flying in spite of the check that had been suddenly put to the movement. Now that the event has justified our decision, and the war, instead of killing the movement, has proved to be the opportunity for carrying it to a triumphant issue, our members, through their delegates to the Council Meeting on January 19, have fallen in with our recommendation that the United Suffragists should as an organisation cease to exist. Though our object in its entirety has not been attained, our Society feels that to continue in existence only for the purpose of removing women's remaining political disabilities is impracticable, and that to widen our scope by undertaking other reforms would be but to add to the number of societies already in existence for such a purpose. Furthermore, the majority of our members are engaged in public work of some kind or another; and to them the closing down of the United Suffragists will mean their release for activities of greater importance to the nation than the maintenance of an office and an office staff for the sole purpose of winning more votes for women—a reform that will depend more upon the use made by women of the power they now have than upon special propaganda.

The Woman Citizen's Club

Those of our women members and readers who would like to remain in touch with our circle can do so by becoming members of our women's club in Southwark, to be known in future as the Woman Citizen's Club. (See page 337.) We hope that many will avail themselves of this opportunity, even if they cannot often use the Club. It is, as it were, a legacy of the United Suffragists to the new women voters, and potential voters, of Southwark; and the spirit in which the Club was founded in November, 1914, and has been carried on until now, will be kept alive all the more surely in the future if our old friends in the United Suffragists will associate themselves with us and our friends South of the river.

The Last Issue of Our Paper

So this is the last issue of our paper VOTES FOR WOMEN. First as the organ of the Women's Social and Political Union, then as an independent suffrage newspaper owned and edited by Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, and finally as the organ of the United Suffragists, VOTES FOR WOMEN has provided an unbroken chronicle of the Suffrage movement in this country for the last ten years. This is a fitting moment for it to come to an end, when the removal of the sex barrier from politics has been accomplished and the time for an exclusively suffrage journal would seem to have gone by. Women's papers of the future will have to deal with other subjects as well as adult woman suffrage. VOTES FOR WOMEN did its work for ten years; it was a pioneer among women's papers; it comes to an end at a dramatic moment.

We do not know what the future will contain for the new men and women voters. Of one thing only we are certain, that peace must come some day. There is a whole civilisation to be healed, a whole new world to be built up. Looking back over the years, seeing the magnificent sacrifices that have been offered up in the cause of women's freedom, we have no fears as to the use that will be made by women of their votes, working side by side with the men whose citizenship they now share. With our faces set to the future, we greet, for the last time through the pages of VOTES FOR WOMEN, all those who have travelled with us to the great day which sees the dawn of women's freedom.

Executive of the United Suffragists

Ruth Cavendish Bentinck
Bertha Brewster (*Hon. Sec.*)
Albert Dawson
H. J. Gillespie (*Hon. Treasurer*)
Barbara Ayrton Gould (*Hon. Treasurer pro tem.*)
Gerald Gould
Laurence Housman
George Lansbury
Henry W. Nevinson
Evelyn Sharp (*Editor*)
May Whitty Webster
Elaine Whelen

TREASURER'S NOTE

In this, the last issue of our paper, I want to take the opportunity of thanking our members for the generous response they have always made to our appeals for funds. Although in many ways it has been extremely difficult to keep the Society and the paper going during the war, there is one battle we have never had to fight, even in the hardest and most difficult days—that of carrying on without funds. In the name of the Executive I should like to thank all those who have subscribed so generously, often at the cost of considerable personal sacrifice.

A detailed and audited balance-sheet will be issued at the end of March with the annual report of the U.S., showing how the funds have been used in the general winding up of the Society. The balance-sheet will include the accounts of January, February and March, 1918, as well, of course, as those for the year 1917. It was decided at the Council Meeting to carry on the Women's Club in Southwark, and it is therefore proposed that should there be any residue of the Society's funds, this should be given to the club. If any member who has given a subscription during the past year should object to this arrangement, will he or she communicate with me at the U.S. office before the end of February?

Barbara Ayrton Gould
(Hon. Treasurer *pro tem.*)

OUT OF THE MUD AND THE NIGHT

By Major H. J. Gillespie, D.S.O.

It was on the Somme that he blew into my dug-out one night. We were doing "harassing fire," and, my subalterns being "all in," I had sent them to bed and was sitting up myself. He had lost his platoon and his way, and his guide had lost him, and might he use my telephone? He might, and did, with the result that he was told by someone at the back of things—probably in pyjamas and a bed—to stay where he was, and, like St. Paul, to wait for the dawn.

He looked rather glum. Would I mind very much if he sat in front of my fire? It was wet and muddy and atrociously cold outside, and there was a certain amount of "stuff" flying about. I was only too glad—"harassing fire" is a monotonous occupation—so I lifted Samuel, the tame field mouse, from the whisky-case chair on to the gramophone, put another piece of the lining of a Boche dug-out on the fire, pushed over the whisky bottle and the cigarettes, and told him to make himself comfortable. Samuel, always averse to strangers, disappeared into the intestines of the gramophone.

He was very long and very thin, with an immense nose and a curiously pointed chin. There was a strange far-off look in his eye, and he reminded me oddly of Don Quixote. Looking about him for something that would serve as a spill, he spied a copy of VOTES FOR WOMEN. "Ah," he said, "my girl's one of 'em." "You know," he went on, as he folded his spill, "that's one of the things that's got to come out of this —— war; that, and a lot of others."

I said nothing, but waited.

"Belgium and militarism, and all that—I grant you that's the immediate business. But that's only the sulphur on the head of the match. Besides, the Boche is beaten. He may not know it yet, but he's beaten. We finished *that* at the Marne and first Wipers. Were you there?"

I shook my head and asked, "How long is it going to take us to bring it home to him?"

"I don't know; but it's not the point. The point is how long it's going to take *us*, the people over there in England, to wake up to what's happening. How many more tons of steel have you got to pump into Fritz; how many more times have I and others got to go over the top, before we, the English, realise that this war's a cosmic conflagration, brought on by our own stupidity and refusal to recognise that the world's got to move somehow—with us, over us, in spite of us?"

Samuel, disappointed with the internal arrangements of the gramophone, emerged and considered the edible possibilities of "The Only Girl," one minute and beady eye fixed on the visitor.

"People think," went on Don Quixote, "that Germany made this war, that we came into it to smash the Kaiser, or save Belgium, or help France, or take Constantinople. Well, perhaps we did. But what *made* the war was a hundred years of stupidity and prejudice and 'laisser-aller.' We've been arguing about that"—he pointed a long forefinger at VOTES—"for fifty years; but that's only one thing. There's Ireland. There are the slums. There's education. There's the people's health. Why, we never discovered that the people had teeth till we got them into the army! We're obstructionists, all the lot of us. And Nature or Fate or the Cosmic Will—God, if you like—won't have obstructionists. Not for more than a century at any rate. Every hundred years or so there's a bonfire—and when enough poor devils like you and I have been killed, the others burn some of the rubbish to lighten the ship; and this old world settles back into her stride again."

"But surely, Germany——" I began, when the telephone rang. I took up the receiver, listened, and then passed it over to him. "It's you, I think."

"Somebody's found my platoon," he said, when he had finished. "I suppose I must go and collect it. Well, many thanks. I hope by the next time we hit up against each other, that milestone"—and again he pointed at VOTES FOR WOMEN—"will be passed, anyway. So long."

"So long, and good luck. Keep away from the track. Fritz has a hate against it."

The night and the mud swallowed him up, and I got into gum boots and a mackintosh and went round the guns. From the far end of the battery I heard Fritz drop one on the track.

When I got back I looked into the signal dug-out, and the signaller on duty said, "That last one got the officer you was talking to, sir. Very badly wounded 'e was, sir. They've got 'im away all right, though." Suddenly, he turned to his switchboard. "'Ullo. What's that? S.O.S.? Right. Got it!"

I was out of the dug-out, and in thirty seconds we were at it as hard as we could load, while the sky towards the east was lit up by dozens of coloured lights against the slowly coming dawn.

* * * * *

When things had quieted down again and I got back to the mess, Samuel was asleep on the whisky-case chair. I picked him up and put him on my knee.

"I wonder if he's right," I said to myself.

* * * * *

I've wondered often since; and now, when "that milestone is passed anyway," I wonder where Don Quixote is, and what he thinks about it, or whether he has gone over the top for the last time and knows.

A BALLADE OF THE LAST GASP

O Woman, pause ere yet it be too late!
Pause, and relax your unbecoming speed,
While still the clock hangs on the stroke of fate—
That clock put back so often by your deed
We wondered Time could manage to proceed—
Having emerged, ah, quick! retire before
Brazen publicity flings wide the door!
One moment's left you for reluctant doubt;
That moment gone, you'll have the chance no more;
The sands of chivalry are running out.

You've waited long, you have but still to wait
Obedient to the government you need;
Shall it be said you would not agitate
Against the female agitator's creed?
What doom is yours from man's protection freed?
Whom can you trust? Whom cling to? Whom implore
To trample you like mats upon the floor?
To whom appeal when dragons crawl about,
Asking that knights for you may shed their gore?
The sands of chivalry are running out.

Never again shall Ministers of State,
Teaching you manners, urge the steward breed
To fling you ruthlessly beyond the gate:
Nor shall the House of Commons, when you plead
Beside its portals, call the police to read
A lesson to you which may yet restore
Your sense of what Creation made you for;
Never shall Youth with salutary shout
Tear you to smithereens, as once they tore;
The sands of chivalry are running out.

Woman! If still your bosom bears a core,
Here at the shrine of womanhood we pour
Our prayer that Man may yet contrive to rout
Those hosts of freedom which all slaves abhor;
The sands of chivalry are running out.

H. W. N.

ALL CLEAR!

One of the most charming anecdotes of the war is that of the weary soldier who, plodding back to the base after a gruelling four days in the trenches, suddenly remarked to his companion: "I say, Bill, you know, some day we shall miss this blinking war!" That is probably what the majority of suffragists are feeling to-day; they are victorious, they are triumphant, they are very well satisfied—but for a little while they will certainly miss this blinking war!

Our thanks are due to those respected opponents in the House of Lords who endeavoured to wreck the progress of the Bill by pointing out just wherein it fell short of the true democratic ideal. Let them take heart; their arguments have not been wasted, but will assuredly return to them after many days, when the inevitable further extension of the franchise comes before the country. Meanwhile, however, we may be quite sure that Sir Douglas Haig would not sulkily refuse to enter Brussels as a conqueror solely because Brussels was not Berlin. It is perfectly true that thousands of young women now serving in the Army or Navy, or in the munition shops, or in some other branch of national service, still remain below the legalised age-limit; but, making every allowance for the chances of human mortality at the present day, we may be optimistic enough to assume that they will not all be blown up or starved to death before they are thirty, and that the majority of them will be happily married by the time they reach that age. The property qualification for single women—very lightly touched upon by the official representatives of the propertied classes in Parliament!—is a far more serious defect; but it is a defect which we may fairly believe will be one of the first to be remedied; since already there are signs that before very long we shall see a considerable readjustment of the claims of property owners, both male and female.

And for my part I do not in the least regret the proper preference given to our grandmother's claim for enfranchisement. Indeed, the country might be distinctly the gainer if our M.P.'s habitually made a point of consulting their grannies on ticklish questions of domestic policy. So altogether we have very good reason for blowing our own trumpets; and for blowing an "All Clear" message upon them to the coming generation.

Madge Mears ("T. O'Meara").

VICTORY*

By Evelyn Sharp

The old rebel leader sat over her smouldering fire and smoked her short clay pipe. There was no sort of comfort in her bare, uncarpeted room. There were no signs of the graces of life—no musical instruments, or books, or beautiful hangings, or soft rugs on the white scrubbed boards. But you could not look at her and say that she had never known any of these things. It was all there; love of books and music and craftsmanship—all there in her fiery old eyes, in her wide, humorous mouth, in her large, shapely, creative hands. She sat in rags, in a whitewashed room with bare scrubbed boards; and she looked as near contentment as one may get who has tried to build the New Jerusalem in any green and pleasant land.

Outside, the town was gone wild with delirious mirth. Flags flew; fireworks shot into the black sky; bands played the music-hall tunes that are appropriate to a national festival. Troops of boy and girl students marched through the streets, self-conscious possessors of a new heaven and a new earth, shouting their songs of liberty. Older folk took their families to the play, or dined in the town, or sat drinking in cafés until they forgot what it was that they had come out to celebrate. Here and there a policeman wandered, an unhappy excrescence on irresponsible gaiety. For the police had orders not to arrest anybody; and it is not easy for a guardian of law and order to turn the other cheek when a girl squirts scent at him, or preserve an air of detachment when a familiar drunkard waits patiently to be taken to the police-court for his customary week-end in the cells.

The old woman sat on in the glow of her log fire, and the rockets outside flung spasmodic flashes of light on to the white walls. It was one of these that revealed her presence to a passing couple of revellers, and not a minute went by before there came steps on her stair and furious battering at her door.

"Come in, and to the devil with your knocking! Is it the dead you would awaken? Then they're awake already, as I can tell you. Come in, I say! Why should there be a lock to keep anyone out?" she cried, as she sucked noisily at her foul little pipe.

The door burst open, and a boy and a girl, with flushed faces and impudent laughter, came tumbling in, one on the top of the other. "Why are you sitting here alone, mother, on a great night like this?" they cried.

"And what else should I be doing?" she asked.

"But don't you know our freedom is won to-day?" exclaimed the boy. He had a flag in his hand, and he waved it high above his head.

"Bless the child! Don't I know that your freedom was won a quarter of a century ago?" retorted the old woman, knocking her pipe out on the hearth.

"No, no!" protested the girl, laughing as she hung on the boy's arm. "It was only to-day that the news came. The King has signed our charter of freedom at last, and we are a free people from this day forth! Where can you have been not to know that?"

"In the past—where your freedom was won for you, my dear," answered the old rebel, filling her pipe with plugs of black tobacco.

The young people looked at one another compassionately. "She is mad; her mind has gone," said their kind young thoughtless eyes.

"Indeed, I am not mad," the old woman startled them in reply. "It is true what I am telling you, though it's never the young—bless them!—that know the truth when they hear it. It's nearly half a century since I started out to free my country and yours, I and a handful of others who are gone where you cannot reach them, though they are here with me, every one of them, this night."

"She must be one of the Old Rebel gang. What sport!" whispered the boy, holding his girl close to him.

"I've heard of them," the girl whispered back. "They went the wrong way to work, didn't they?"

"I should jolly well think so," was the confident reply. "They put up everybody's back by the way they went on. Of course, the King could not negotiate with them; you have to leave a way for kings to climb down, don't you know! So the Old Rebels were all outlawed, and they made hell of the wilderness out there, besides damaging the cause like anything. However, fortunately they got killed off one by one, till at last they were all gone, and we could set to work in a rational way and win what they had missed."

The girl's eyes were fixed curiously on the shrunken figure by the fire. "This one wasn't killed off," she said. "This one hasn't missed what—what we've won." Impulsively she slipped out of her lover's arms and dropped on her knees beside the old woman. "Tell me what happened half a century ago," she begged, with a sudden desire to know.

"The thing that always happens when you set out to fight for freedom," answered the rebel leader. Her eyes grew like stars as she looked back into the years. "They outlawed me fifty years ago," she said; "turned me out for a nuisance and a meddler because I wanted to set the people free. The people didn't want to be free; they wanted to be comfortable; and I couldn't promise them comfort. The prospect I laid before them would have repelled an anchorite! It repelled them." She stopped, chuckling, and relighted her pipe with a charred faggot from the hearth. "So they were good enough to outlaw me as soon as they had burnt my house to the ground. (I was a rich young heiress then, and could have married the King's son if I'd had a mind to.) They looted it first, I remember, and drank the cellars dry, and threw my books into the lake. Oh! they meant that I should experience every detail of the austerity I asked them to share." She laughed again, but without bitterness.

The girl at her knee drew closer. "Go on," she said breathlessly. "What happened next?"

"The expected happened. It is only in struggles for freedom that it does," smiled the old rebel. "One by one, friends of mine, girls and boys like you two, came and joined me in the wilderness out there. And together we fought until we won the victory."

"But you didn't, you know; really you didn't," remonstrated the boy. He was impatient of this old hag who had cast a spell over his girl. "*We* won it, years afterwards. I tell you the King has only signed the charter to-day!"

"That's the way of it, child; that's always the way of it, as you'll know when somebody else claims the victories you and your sweetheart will be going out to fight for to-morrow," said the obstinate woman. Then she suddenly straightened her bent old back and struck them both dumb with the fire that leapt from her eyes. "When they hanged young Peter in the market-place, Peter won your freedom for you. When my beautiful Anna, my best friend, was tortured in prison till she died of it, *she* won your freedom for you. When Michael, the lad I loved before all the others, fell fighting up in the mountains, he won your freedom for you. Your cause, mine and yours, children, was won a quarter of a century ago, when the last of the Old Rebels died for it."

The boy, standing over the girl he loved, moved restlessly. "You didn't die, anyway," he muttered.

"I did," said the rebel leader, and she paused to curse at the pipe that wouldn't draw. "There are more ways than one of dying for a cause, young man, as you'll soon discover—if you ever take up one that isn't won already! I died, when they threw my books into the lake and robbed me of everything that made life beautiful and gracious. I died, when the first man I ever loved hounded me out of my world and put the torch to the home in which we were to have lived as man and wife. I died, when they shot Michael, the lad to whom I had vowed to give myself, priest or no priest, when our cause was won. What can you know of dying who have not had your happiness crucified again and again? What can you know of fighting for freedom who have never sat in a bare room, as I sit to-night, watching a procession of dear dead rebels march by, who won your cause for you before you were born?"

The boy was tugging at the hands of his beloved. "Come away; she is mad, I tell you! Come away!" He could not have told why every instinct he possessed commanded him to get her away.

The girl's eyes were still fixed on the scarred face of the old rebel. "Then—then is it a funeral we are celebrating, and not a victory at all?" she asked, scarcely above a whisper. Her young heart felt torn in two, as her lover implored her to come away and the woman's eyes held her bound.

The old rebel laughed aloud. "Run along to your flags and your fireworks!" she cried, and pushed the girl into her lover's arms. "Do you call it death to die for freedom? Go and grow up, both of you."

At the door, to which the boy had dragged her, the girl still hung back. Her face had gone dead pale, and her eyes, like the old rebel's, glowed like stars. "I think I have grown up," she said. "I do understand. When you win a cause it is not the end, it is only the beginning." And she turned and stumbled down the stairs.

"What have you done to her?" the boy thundered at the old woman. "What have you done to her?"

"So little, if you only knew," was all the answer he got. "There is so little age can do for youth."

The old woman sat on, smoking her abominable tobacco, and smiling into the smouldering fire with her starry eyes and her wide humorous mouth, long after the boy had flung himself out into the night in pursuit of his girl. "Anna—Peter—Michael—all of you!" she murmured. Her pipe made an excruciating noise as she sucked at it—and round the bare room circled the endless procession of those who never die.

* Reprinted from the *Herald* by kind permission of the Editor.

THOSE WHO DIED FOR IT

Workers in the Suffrage movement have had all along the inspiriting knowledge that their cause was bound to win: the only doubt was whether it would win in their time. And one's first thoughts, in these days when the Suffrage is at last not merely a certainty, but an immediate certainty, must be for those who gave their best and did not live to see the reward of their giving. The Suffrage cause has had many martyrs; and it is certain they held their martyrdom worth while. It is for us men, who have so often misused the vote in the past, to join with women, who now for the first time have the choice between using and misusing the vote, in the building of a world in which all injustices, all social and economic inequalities, whether between sex and sex or class and class or nation and nation, shall be abolished.

Gerald Gould.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL—1917-18

Receives the Royal Assent February 6, 1918

Speaker's Conference Appointed, October, 1916.

Report of Speaker's Conference issued as a White Paper, February 7, 1917.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 15, 1917, by Mr. Walter Long. First Reading passed without a Division.

Second Reading Passed, May 23, 1917, by a majority of **289** (Ayes, 329; Noes, 40).

Committee Stage entered, June 6. Sir George Cave in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4, Sub-Sections 1 and 2 (Women's Parliamentary Franchise), June 19:—Sir Frederick Banbury's Motion to leave out these two Sub-Sections debated all day and thrown out by a Majority of **330** (Ayes, 387; Noes, 57).

Sub-Section 3 (Women's Local Government Franchise), June 20:—Agreed to without a Division.

Clause 4, June 20:—Passed by a Majority of **197** (Ayes, 214; Noes, 17).

Report Stage Entered, November, 1917.

THIRD READING PASSED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, DECEMBER 7, 1917.

BILL INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, DECEMBER 11, 1917, by Viscount Peel. First Reading passed without a Division.

Second Reading Passed, December 19, 1917, without a Division.

Committee Stage Entered, January 8, 1918.

Clause 4, Sub-Sections 1 and 2 (Women's Parliamentary Franchise) Considered January 10 and 11, and 14 and 15. Lord Loreburn's Amendment to strike out these two sub-sections rejected by a Majority of **63.** (Noes, 134; Ayes, 71). Lord Halifax's amendment, proposing that the two sub-sections should be submitted to a referendum of the women Local Government electors, rejected by a Majority of **28.** (Noes, 90; Ayes, 62).

Clause 4 Agreed to, January 15, 1918, without a Division.

Report Stage Entered, January 28, 1918.

THIRD READING PASSED IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, FEBRUARY 1, 1918.

Lords' Amendments considered in the House of Commons, February 5.

Pourparlers between the two Houses, February 6.

ROYAL ASSENT GIVEN, FEBRUARY 6, 1918.

CLAUSE 4.

4.—(1) A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a parliamentary elector for a constituency (other than a university constituency) if she has attained the age of thirty years; and is not subject to any legal incapacity; and is entitled to be registered as a local government elector in respect of the occupation in that constituency of land or premises (not being a dwelling-house of a yearly value of not less than five pounds) or of a dwelling-house; or is the wife of a husband entitled to be so registered.

(2) A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a parliamentary elector for a university constituency if she has attained the age of thirty years and would be entitled to be so registered if she were a man, or has been admitted to and passed the final examination and kept under the conditions required of women by the university the period of residence necessary for a man to obtain a degree at any university forming or forming part of a university constituency which did not at the time the examination was passed admit women to degrees.

(3) A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a local government elector for any local government electoral area where she would be entitled to be so registered if she were a man; or where she is the wife of a man who is entitled to be so registered in respect of premises in which they both reside, and she has attained the age of thirty years and is not subject to any legal incapacity.

CORRESPONDENCE

NATIONAL HOUSEKEEPING.

To the Editor of VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Dear Madam,—I am afraid that in proposing a capital levy after the war I did not make myself clear, for I see that Mr. Nevinson entirely misunderstands it.

It is not a special impost upon holders of War Loan, but a levy on the wealth of all the citizens of the country, who are the persons responsible for the debt, and who must in any case, sooner or later, find the money for its redemption. It has further to be noted that no part of the capital levy will fall upon foreign holders. The proposal is therefore entirely the reverse of repudiation, which would differentiate unjustly against those (citizens or foreigners) who had lent money to the State. As to the option to holders of War Loan securities to pay their share of the general levy in these securities, it is, so far as it goes, an advantage to them.

Mr. Nevinson's proposal, on the other hand, is to single out War Loan and to make it, unlike other securities, confiscatable at the death of some holder (presumably the original lender). This would give to each separate piece of War Loan a different value dependent on the prospect of life of the holder, and consequently would make it unsaleable. Further, it would be a definite breach of the conditions on which the money was lent. It is, in fact, nothing but a limited form of repudiation, and merits the censure which Mr. Nevinson incorrectly metes out to the proposal for a general capital levy.

—Yours, &c., F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

SOCIAL HYGIENE IN NEW ZEALAND

To the Editor of VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Dear Madam,—In reference to the counter-statements of Lady Askwith and Miss Vida Goldstein on the supposed attitude of Antipodean women towards compulsory detention of diseased persons, allow me to show by the recent experience of New Zealand that the emancipated women here generally oppose such a scheme, as the thinking women of Western Australia and Victoria did. Late in the just-concluded session a Social Hygiene Bill was brought down, proposing to create a separate Board to deal with venereal disease, to detain diseased prostitutes and persons consorting with them in prison hospitals till "cured," and to confer autocratic powers on the Minister of Health in this connection, as well as to enable magistrates to convict on evidence not usually admissible in a court of law. Very prompt action was taken by a few leading women in Wellington to have the Bill delayed till the women of the country should have time to consider it. A storm of protest was immediately raised in all the large centres regarding these invidious clauses, while the good points of the Bill were endorsed. The action of the women was finely supported by the larger proportion of the men doctors of the Dominion, Dr. Newman, M.P., leading the opposition in Parliament. Conferences between the women and the Cabinet ended in the re-casting of the measure on lines approved by advanced thinkers here, and by the experts of Europe in recent medical commissions. The Bill now contains no compulsory clauses, but heavily penalises sufferers of either sex who do not seek qualified treatment and continue under it as long as it is necessary. The Minister of Health is empowered to arrange with the public hospitals for free treatment of those unable to pay. Treatment by quacks is forbidden; heavy penalties are laid on diseased persons who engage in occupations where food is handled; and on the employers of such persons in such occupations. Health patrols, both men and women, are to be appointed by the Minister to protect and advise young persons. It is made an offence knowingly to infect another person with disease, and other clauses provide for the education of the public on sex hygiene, and for other reasonable safeguards.

Out of this agitation has emerged the inauguration in Wellington of a free clinic for treating venereal disease; in Christchurch a clinic was already established. Excellent results have been obtained in the military camps here by lectures arranged by the Defence Department, and given by chaplains, medical men, and social workers. Next year venereal disease will be still further reduced by the closing of all liquor bars after six o'clock. No liquor has ever been allowed in New Zealand canteens.

All these facts go to show that women voters here have views upon these subjects—the same views held by the best men of the country—and that they are not always unsuccessful in enforcing them.—Yours, &c., JESSIE MACKAY.

Christchurch, New Zealand, November 9.

NEW CONSTITUTION IN HOLLAND

(From a Dutch Correspondent.)

At last the final stage has been reached, and on December 12 we witnessed the proclamation of the new Constitution, which brings us an electoral reform with proportional representation, manhood suffrage, compulsory voting, and for women only eligibility.

The Mayor's reading of the proclamation in great official state to the assembled people was greeted by the applause of all democrats in the nation as if they announced the triumph of true democracy. But the women, the governed not governing half of the people, have not refrained from uttering their dissatisfaction. All the leading newspapers, with only two exceptions, contained letters from women who protested against the tyranny of taxation and legislation without representation, pointing out that now men are obliged by the law not to hide their light under the corn-measure, whereas all the light the women might give remains deliberately shut up; the legal rule of one sex over both sexes is continued, and the resources of the country to traverse the present crisis are left in the hands of the men only.

No doubt the nation cannot fail to see the inconsistency of recognising the right of women to sit in Parliament and denying them a vote. It is for the Government that will come into power by next year's proportional election to remedy this mistake, since the new Constitution admits the introduction of woman suffrage. Already three of the seven parties represented in the States-General are trying to nominate women for Parliament, and we may hope soon to see the Netherlands join the suffrage States of the world. **Martina G. Kramers.**

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

27, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2. Telephone, Holborn 5880

Colours: Purple, White and Orange

U.S. WOMEN'S CLUB

92, Borough Road, S.E.

Secretary: Miss V. Aitken. Tel.: Hop 4172

The Club Christmas festivities—which began with grocery tickets for all the members and toys and sweets for their children—were brought to a close by the annual Christmas Party, which took place on January 26. The hall hired for the occasion presented a gay scene wtih its garlands of flowers (paper, alas!) and its banners of purple, white and orange, when the two hundred and twenty members and children filed in and took their places at the three long tables laden with "war-time" dainties. A short concert, kindly arranged by Mr. Threadgold, followed the tea and won hearty applause; then came the conjurer, whose wondrous display of magic fascinated both adults and children alike. The proceedings terminated with a "march past" of the children, each of whom, on reaching the platform, was presented with a packet of sweets.

Jumble Sale.—The Jumble Sale on January 14 was the most successful yet held, £13 16s. being realised towards the upkeep of the Club. Hearty thanks are due to all the friends who sent us parcels for the sale, and to the members who, by making it known to their friends, and by patronising it themselves, secured the success of the sale.

Lectures and Concerts.—Very successful concerts have been arranged during the month by Mr. Threadgold and Mrs. Blomfield, whose efforts in this respect are so much appreciated by the members; the meetings also have been exceptionally well attended, and thanks are due to Mr. Pethick Lawrence and Miss Flatman for their excellent lectures.

Wanted.—More Helpers are urgently needed at the Club; would anyone who has time to spare for—and, if possible, experience in—this work kindly communicate with the Secretary?

Gifts.—The following gifts are gratefully acknowledged:—For Christmas Party: Mrs. McCall, £1 8s. 6d.; Mrs. Roberts, £1 1s.: Mrs. Silver, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Young, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Allen, 2s.; Miss Evelyn Sharp, £1; Miss Newsome, sugar.

FEBRUARY LECTURES.

Tuesday, February 12; 8 p.m.—Miss K. D. Courtney on "The Endowment of Motherhood."

Tuesday, February 19; 8 p.m.—Miss F. M. Green on "The New Franchise Bill."

Tuesday, February 26; 8 p.m.—Miss Evelyn Sharp on "Citizenship."

ASHFORD U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Mr. John Marsh, 45, Royd's Road Willsborough, Kent. Organizer: Miss Maude White, Magazine House, Winchelsea, Sussex

Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck represented Ashford at the U.S. Council meeting last week. We are very pleased to secure the sympathy and help of the Rev. and Mrs. Corlett. Coming, as they come, from a region where women have the vote, the Isle of Man, Ashford is certain of their co-operation. A public meeting has been arranged, and will take place at the Co-operative Hall, High Street, on Saturday, March 9, at 6.45 p.m. Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck will be the speaker. Mr. Noble, of the Ashford Trades and Labour Council, has been invited to take the chair. Will members make a big effort to attend? It will be one of the most important meetings ever held by Suffragists at Ashford.

It is with great regret that we are losing Mr. and Mrs. Roberts. They have been very keen members, always ready and willing to further the cause of Women Suffrage in every way. May we remind members that all subscriptions are being called in now? Already received: Mrs. Caister, 1s.; Mrs. Kiltur, 1s.; Miss Jiles, 1s.; Mrs. Corlett, 1s.; Mrs. Clayton, 1s.; Mrs. Marsh, 2s.; Councillor A. D. Bankes, 1s.; Mrs. Bankes, 1s.; Mrs. Jolley, 6d.; Mr. B. Jolley, 6d.; Mr. T. Roberts, 6d.; Mrs. Roberts, 6d.; Mrs. Barnes, 6d.; Mr. Lee, 1s.

Organising Fund: Mr. Lee, 4s.; Mrs. Caister, 1s.; Miss Jiles, 6d.; Mrs. Knock, 17s.; Mrs. Kiltur, 6d.; R. B. G., 10s.; Mr. A. Bankes, 1s.; Mrs. Bankes, 1s.

BOLTON U.S.

Hon. Sec. and Treas.: Miss S. W. Holden, 110, Tottington Road, Harwood, Bolton

A special meeting was held on January 21 to receive the delegates' report of the Annual Council Meeting, which was duly approved. A similar resolution to that of headquarters re disbanding, was passed unanimously. The Secretary was instructed to call the final meeting after the passing into law of the Representation of the People Bill, in order to present the closing report of the Branch, and, after formally disbanding, to discuss our future activities. While nothing definite could be settled, the general desire seemed to incline to the W.I.L., as the policy of that League includes adult suffrage and also offers a wide field for service, not only in the interests of women, but of humanity generally.

HAMPSTEAD U.S.

Hon. Secretaries: Miss Daisy Solomon, 64, Pattison Road, N.W. 2; Miss E. Engert, 3, Pattison Road, N.W. 2.

A meeting was held on Saturday, February 2, when Mrs. Binnie, 44, Platts Lane, was the hostess. Lady Barrett, M.D., M.S. (Mrs. Florence Willy), spoke on Infant Welfare, and Mrs. Sadd Brown presided. On Saturday afternoon, March 2, Miss Gore Booth has promised to lecture on "What Equality Really Means." We hope members will bring their friends to this meeting.

HENDON WOMEN'S FRANCHISE SOCIETY

(Affiliated to United Suffragists)

Hon. Sec.: Mrs. McCabe, 49, Bridge Lane, Hendon, N.W. 4.

On Friday, February 8, Dr. Alice Vickery will be "At Home" to members and friends, from 2.30 p.m., at 47, Rotherwick Road. Mrs. E. How Martyn will give an address on "Food in Wartime," and we trust there will be a good discussion to follow, it being so important a subject.

On the evening of the 16th, Miss Harriet Newcomb gave us a most interesting address on "Mary Slessor of Nigeria," giving many instances of her tremendous courage and resource. Single-handed, she set herslf to put an end to some of the terrible practices of the natives—a by no means high type—such as the sacrifice of infant twins, in the belief that they would grow up monsters, and the putting to death of many men and women on the death of a chief, so that his spirit should have an impressive retinue to accompany him to the next world. By enlisting the sympathies of the chief's sister, Mary Slessor was able sometimes to obtain possession of the twins, and in the course of time assembled a numerous family of native children for whom she had a great affection. There can be no doubt that her influence and good work did much to prepare the ground for the successful government of the country when taken over by the Government from the company who had "managed" it for many years.

SUFFRAGE CELEBRATIONS

United Suffragists' Tea Party on March 16.

Suffragists will meet more than once in the course of the next few weeks to rejoice together over the great victory that has been won and the step forward that has been taken on the road to women's complete enfranchisement.

Church Thanksgiving

After we go to Press, on Saturday, February 9, under the auspices of the Church League for Women's Suffrage, a special service of thanksgiving will be held at 2 p.m., in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, at which the United Suffragists will be represented; and their banner will be carried in procession up the aisle by Miss Brewster (Hon. Secretary) and Mrs. Ayrton Gould (Hon. Treasurer). The Bishop of Willesden will give the address.

On the next day, the Free Church League for Women Suffrage announce that a Suffrage Thanksgiving will be held at the City Temple at 6 p.m., conducted by Miss A. Maude Royden, the Rev. Constance M. Coltman, B.D., and Mrs. Bonwick.

INTERNATIONAL SUFFRAGE RALLY

Kingsway Hall; Saturday Afternoon, March 9; 3 p.m

On Saturday afternoon, March 9, a great International Suffrage Rally will be held in the Kingsway Hall under the auspices of the Women's International League, at which women speakers representing all sections of the community will welcome the passing of the Reform Bill, and dwell on the task that lies before the new women voters. Mrs. Swanwick will take the Chair, and among the speakers will be Lady Barrett, M.D., Miss Margaret Macmillan, Mrs. Despard, Miss Evelyn Sharp, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, and Suffragists from Russia, China, India and other countries.

Tickets:—Numbered and reserved, 5s. and 2s. 6d.; Reserved, 1s. and 3d., to be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, United Suffragists, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.2.

WOMEN SUFFRAGISTS' CELEBRATION

Queen's Hall; Wednesday Evening, March, 13; 8 p.m.

Under this title the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies will hold a mass meeting in the Queen's Hall, on Wednesday, March 13, at 8 p.m., to welcome the Extension of the Franchise to Women. Mrs. Fawcett, LL.D., will take the Chair; and short speeches will be made by Miss A. Maude Royden, Lord Lytton, the Rt. Honble. Sir John Simon, and the Rt. Honble. Mr. Arthur Henderson.

In addition, there will be music.

Tickets: 21s., 10s. 6d., 5s., 2s. 6d., and 1s., to be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, United Suffragists.

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS' JUBILATION.

The United Suffragists, while taking part in and heartily supporting all the above celebrations, mean to have a special jubilation of their own for their members and supporters. This will take the form of a Tea Party in the Caxton Hall (so full of memories!) on Saturday afternoon, March 16, from 4 to 7, and will, it is thought, form a fitting wind-up to the preceding rejoicings. Every London member will be sent an invitation card, on application to Miss Brewster at the United Suffragists' Offices; anyone wishing for a card of invitation for a friend is asked to apply for one at the same time. The Committee are anxious to exclude no one who would like to be present; but they are obliged to ask for applications for cards to be made beforehand because of the difficulty of supplying a sufficiency of "war teas" with no fear of any waste. They hope that every member and supporter of the U.S. who happens to be in town at that time will make a point of asking for an invitation, as this will be the last occasion on which the U.S. Executive and members will have the pleasure of meeting one another officially.

Very short speeches will be made, but most of the afternoon will be spent in meeting old friends and talking over old times. The occasion is to be one of rejoicing and congratulation, and friendly intercourse between men and women who have been united in a great cause and are about to become scattered again in the various spheres of public work to which they happen as individuals to be drawn.

Try to attend all the above celebrations of the passing of the Representation of the People Act and the abolition of the sex barrier in politics.

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COUNCIL MEETING OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

Saturday, January 19

The third Annual Council Meeting of the United Suffragists was held at the Essex Hall, on Saturday, January 19. Delegates from U.S. branches at Ashford, Bolton, Glasgow, Hampstead and Golders Green, Liverpool, and Portsmouth were present, in addition to members of the Executive and delegates from the National branch.

Miss Evelyn Sharp was voted to the Chair.

The Report for 1917 was read by the Hon. Secretary, and adopted by the Council. The Financial Report was read by the Hon. Treasurer, and adopted, subject to the approval of the auditors.

Miss Sharp, from the chair, gave a short summary of the history of the United Suffragists, and the work done by them leading up to the present satisfactory Franchise situation.

Future of the United Suffragists

Mr. H. W. Nevinson then moved the following resolution:

That on the passage into law of the Representation of the People Bill, the United Suffragists shall disband.

The speaker said that, in view of the great triumph that was almost won, the main purpose for which the Society was formed was accomplished. It was true that we had not yet secured our full demand, but we had got almost six times as much as we would have got by the Conciliation Bill, for which such tremendous sacrifices had been made. The complete enfranchisement of women could not possibly be delayed for many years, and would be demanded by many organisations other than the present Suffrage Societies. It would be impossible to maintain a society for the sole purpose of enfranchising women between twenty-one and thirty. It would be far better to close down in the moment of victory than struggle to keep alive until the full demand was granted. The people who had worked hardest in this cause were reformers in various directions, and the sacrifice of time, energy, and prospects made by them in the last twelve years had been very great. Most of them felt they must now turn their energies in other directions for the public benefit.

Miss Jones (Portsmouth U.S.) proposed an amendment, recommending that before disbanding the Executive of the U.S. should approach the executives of other women's societies to see if some concerted action could not be taken to form a society of men and women, to see that questions particularly affecting women were not neglected, either politically, industrially, or socially.

Mrs. Ayrton Gould said that there would still be organisations which our members could join, which would continue to work for the complete emancipation of women. She mentioned some of these, and also made it clear that the Council had power, if it wished, to carry on the U.S. and to nominate a new Committee for the purpose, but that the members of the present Executive did not propose to stand for re-election.

After some discussion the amendment was withdrawn.

Miss Holden (Bolton), Miss Marks (Liverpool), Miss Rose and Mrs. Dollan (Glasgow) expressed their regret that the fellowship of the Society should be dissolved, but recognised the necessity of bringing the organisation to an end. Miss Somers expressed the gratitude of the delegates to the Executive for the work they had done, and said that the interests of women in all departments were never likely to be neglected when the members of the Executive had been set free to take part in public life.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

It was then decided to delay the publication of the Annual Report for 1917 until the passage of the Bill, and to bring out the Report as for 1917-1918. The same decision was taken with regard to the Financial Report.

Future of "Votes for Women"

Mrs. Ayrton Gould proposed the following resolution:—

That in view of the changed political situation, and of the increasing difficulties of distribution owing to war conditions, VOTES FOR WOMEN shall cease with the February issue.

Mrs. Gould said that owing to the great difficulties of transport, the wholesalers were increasingly reluctant to undertake the distribution of a penny monthly, and it was becoming very difficult for readers to obtain the paper. The shortage of paper was another very serious difficulty, and in a few months it would be almost impossible to get a fresh stock. In view of the fact that the activities of the Society were about to come to a close, it would be advisable to bring the paper to an end with the passing of the Bill.

Miss Newcomb (Hampstead and Golders Green) read a resolution passed by her Executive, recognizing the services of Miss Evelyn Sharp as Editor.

The Resolution was then carried unanimously.

Future of the Club

The future of the U.S. Club was discussed at some length. It was decided that when the Society came to an end, members should be asked to promise subscriptions for some definite period.

Miss Newcomb spoke of the great value of the Club as an educational centre now that many of its members were to be voters.

The following resolution was proposed by Miss Wertheim and seconded by Mrs. Philip Brewster:—

That this Council empowers the Executive to appoint a sub-committee to draw up a constitution for the U.S. Women's Club and afterwards to elect a Managing Committee, with full powers to carry on the Club as long as it seems both possible and necessary.

This was carried unanimously.

THE WOMAN CITIZEN'S CLUB

92, Borough Road, Southwark, S.E. 1.

In accordance with the instructions given to the U.S. Executive by the U.S. Council of January 19, a sub-Committee was appointed to draw up a scheme for re-modelling the U.S. Women's Club in Southwark, so that it might be carried on after the United Suffragists as a Society had ceased to exist. The sub-Committee consisted of Dame May Webster (Chairman), Miss Brewster (Hon. Secretary), Mrs. Ayrton Gould, Mrs. Hicks, Miss Evelyn Sharp and Miss Young. Their proposed scheme was submitted to the Executive Committee of the United Suffragists and duly ratified by that body.

The main features of the new Club constitution are as follows:—

1. That the Club be called the Woman Citizen's Club.
2. That it be conducted by a Committee consisting of seven women members, including an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, with power to add to their number, and to make such changes in the management of the Club as may seem from time to time desirable. These shall be appointed by the U.S. Executive Committee before it disbands.
3. That a Club Council, consisting of the Committee, the Club members, and the Club helpers (who should if possible join the Club as members) be called not less than four times a year, as an Advisory Body to the Acting Committee.
4. That the membership of the Club be open to women and girls over the age of 16, at a minimum membership fee of one penny a week (4s. 4d. per year).
5. That there shall be a Canteen for the supply of refreshments at cost price.
6. That, while recreative in purpose, the Club shall offer every opportunity for the discussion of subjects of interest and for exchange of views on politics, social and industrial matters, and all questions of importance to women citizens.

It will be seen from the above provisions for its continuance that the Woman Citizen's Club will be open to all women from the age of 16 upwards, who care to pay the required subscription and conform to the general scheme of the Club and to the rules laid down for its management by the Club Committee. Naturally, the membership will continue as before to consist mainly of Southwark residents, who are more able than others to make use of the Club. It is, however, thought that many of the United Suffragists, living elsewhere, may like to join the Club as members when the U.S. Society has disbanded, in order to retain a link with the old Suffrage days, and also with the Southwark Suffragists, now voters and citizens, with whom they have been associated since the early days of the war. All those who would like to join the Woman Citizen's Club are asked to communicate either with Miss Evelyn Sharp or Miss V. Aitken.

Lady Cowdray, whose interest in women as citizens is widely known, has consented to become President of the Club. Mrs. Ayrton Gould will act as Hon. Treasurer, Miss Evelyn Sharp as Hon. Secretary; Miss Aitken will continue to look after the management of the Club as Club Director. Other members of the Club Committee, as so far elected, are Dame May Webster, Mrs. McCall, and Miss Young. A Club Council will be called early in the spring.

Features of the Club Evenings

The meetings on Tuesday evenings will continue to be held; and it is hoped that a good many of these will deal with subjects of interest to women who want to use their new citizen's powers to the utmost. Miss Evelyn Sharp will be glad to hear from any speakers kind enough to come and address the Club on questions of social reform, foreign policy, economics, and other matters of importance and interest. The members are also greatly interested in accounts of foreign countries. Will any reader who has travelled abroad give them a lecture now and then? That the Club is fully alive to matters of public interest was apparent on the evening of February 6, when the news of the Royal Assent to the Reform Bill was telephoned through. A scene of wild enthusiasm followed, and the members insisted that the purple, white and orange flags of the United Suffragists should fly from the Club windows on the following day.

The concerts on Wednesday evenings will also be continued. It is not easy, however, to obtain the services of sufficient musicians on these occasions, and Mrs. Ayrton Gould, who generally presides on Wednesday evening, will be grateful to musical performers of all kinds who are good enough to send her their names as willing to help sometimes. The concerts are an immense boon to those who have been at work all day and have, in these days, so much to occupy their minds; and the Club Committee are anxious that their high standard shall be maintained.

Helpers in the Canteen are wanted continually. Anyone who can give a regular afternoon or evening (not Sunday), or can even be telephoned to on special occasions, will greatly help by sending in her name to Miss Aitken or Miss Evelyn Sharp.

Until March 25, communications relating to the Club can be addressed to the United Suffragists Offices, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C. 2. After that, only to the Woman Citizen's Club, 92, Borough Road, Southwark.

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